756 him. Both benches had four feet, but one had
[352] a protruding tail and head with a red spot.
[532] The two men then went outside and the chief doctor closed the door to keep others away. From within, one could hear the elder man's voice in a song which gradually became louder and louder.

According to custom, they sat on benches in front of the house and the head man sang to the novice. Two of the assistant medicine men went out to watch for the sunrise so that they could warn the chief that it was time to put the novice back in the hut.

When they came in, the aspirant took off his white blanket. The head medicine man took the feathers from the first carrying bag which was still on the low bench, some stones, a staff,
[534] a jaguar skin, a long reed flute (*kuLu*) which only the medicine men can make and put these things in the leaf room. The two new benches were not included. Then the head man entered with the aspirant to arrange the details. When he came out, he said to the novice who remained inside, "You do not have permission to sleep, not even a little."

The aspirant had to stay in the room all the following day without sleeping because to be a doctor he must show his power of self control. In fact, this endurance test was explained by a simple question: if a medicine man were to have a very sick patient and fell asleep, what would happen?

The drinks and food were now passed for the fourth time with the same ceremony as
[534] before. Then the head man blew a conch-shell horn right by the novice's wall and pushed the leaves. This was to be certain that he was not dozing. The aspirant was forbidden to talk, but he answered by blowing at times a conch-shell horn and at others a flute. Every now and then the other medicine men would poke their staffs at the wall and receive a blown attestation of his wakefulness or a knock. This continued throughout the day.

At night the ordeal ended and the novice could leave his leaf compartment and take his stones. However, he had to wait four days before he could finish the mouth-washing ceremony and become in truth a *jawá*.

• 758 **Sickness.** On the Caribbean side, but less often on the Pacific, a lean-to for a sick person is made of *pejibaye* leaves at one end of the

758 house. The *pejibaye* has the advantage of thorns to keep innocent children from straying into trouble, as no one except the medicine man is allowed to touch the ill. Water is kept within reach of the sick person by suspending it in a gourd from a long stick.

826 753 Lehmann [147] pointed out that the liver was considered the key to all emotions, sickness, and health. This is still true. The Cabécar phrase for happy or the state of good health signifies that the liver is in good condition. [774] Lehmann further adds that the activities of the soul are connected with this organ.[148] On the whole, many fevers are supposed to be caused by the liver. Among the Bribri, however, influenza is credited to *bák-namá* (*see* Myths).

164 The principal complaints noted among these peoples are caused by intestinal parasites with subsequent anemia; conjunctivitis, especially among the Bribri; *papalomollo* or Leishmaniosis; and malaria, particularly in Talamanca. Measles, mumps, and at times smallpox and yellow fever also take a heavy toll when they occur in epidemic form.

839 Among the Cabécares, there are numerous cases of male perversion. No social stigma is attached nor is any cure attempted.

278 **Curing.** Herbs, vines, quinine bark, and other medicines prepared from flowers and berries are used.

752 824 A medicine for snake bites is made from *Dracontium Pittieri* Engl. and also from *Aristolochia sylvicola* Standley, which is mashed and cooked. This is combined with the bark of a tree called *bek* in Cabécar and is used to cause sterilization. Diets, as has been noted, form a part of many cures although they are also observed at times of death by the *usegLa* clan. The principal ceremonial and magical elements included in curing are songs (prayers), always sung with the staff and the stones. One of the prayers the medicine men of Cabécar and some of the Bribri sing to combat sickness and to foretell if the patient will live or die is given under the heading of *Sacred Songs*. To rid one of the *wimbLu*, the medicine man sings for three nights and asks *sibu* (*see* Theological Beliefs) not to allow the spirit to scare any more.

757 755 533 [787]

[147] Lehmann, 1920, vol. 1, p. 282.
[148] Lehmann, 1920, vol. 1, p. 282.